

Forces Behind Victory

Trace how groups shaped both sides of the Revolutionary War.

SS.8.A.3.4 "Examine the contributions of influential groups to both the American and British war efforts during the American Revolutionary War and their effects on the outcome of the war."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the name of each group in the passage. Beside each underlined group, write C next to a contribution and E next to an effect on the war.

Many Hands in a War

- ① Winning independence required more than the Continental Army. George Washington's regular soldiers held the main American force together through shortages, long marches, and difficult winters. Local militias, made up of part-time fighters, guarded communities, gathered information, and sometimes struck British patrols. Women supported the cause by managing farms and shops, making supplies, raising money, and serving as nurses, cooks, and spies. These efforts kept the American army fed and connected to civilian communities, even when enlistments ended and supplies were scarce.
- ② Black Americans made difficult choices during the war. In 1775, Lord Dunmore promised freedom to enslaved people owned by rebel masters who escaped and joined British forces. Thousands sought British protection, while other Black soldiers and sailors served the Patriot cause. France became an important American ally in 1778. French money, troops, and warships helped the Americans challenge Britain's larger military. At Yorktown in 1781, a French fleet blocked British sea escape while American and French troops surrounded General Cornwallis. That combined action led to a major British surrender.
- ③ Britain also relied on several groups. Loyalists, colonists who remained loyal to the king, supplied information, raised provincial regiments, and fought beside British regulars. Britain hired German auxiliary soldiers, often called Hessians, to add trained troops. Many Indigenous nations allied with Britain because they hoped to slow American settlement on their lands, although Native communities made different choices. Their fighters pressured frontier settlements and drew Patriot militia away from other campaigns. Yet Britain struggled to supply forces across the Atlantic and to coordinate separated campaigns. Patriot persistence and French support helped overcome Britain's advantages.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Choose two groups that supported the American cause. What did each group contribute, and how did those contributions help the American war effort?

2 How did French support at Yorktown affect the outcome of that campaign? Use two details from the passage.

3 What were two ways Loyalists supported Britain? Explain how their support strengthened the British war effort.

4 Why did Britain lose the war even though it had military advantages? Use evidence about at least one group and one challenge Britain faced.

Write a four-sentence claim about which group had the greatest effect on the war’s outcome. Use two details from the passage and compare that group with one other group in 65 to 85 words.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the name of each group in the passage. Beside each underlined group, write C next to a contribution and E next to an effect on the war. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Choose two groups that supported the American cause. What did each group contribute, and how did those contributions help the American war effort?	Answers may name the Continental Army, militias, women, Black Patriot soldiers and sailors, or the French. Contributions included fighting, guarding communities, gathering information, providing supplies and care, or supplying money, troops, and warships. These efforts sustained or strengthened the American war effort.
2	How did French support at Yorktown affect the outcome of that campaign? Use two details from the passage.	A French fleet blocked British escape by sea, while French and American troops surrounded Cornwallis. These combined actions led to a major British surrender.
3	What were two ways Loyalists supported Britain? Explain how their support strengthened the British war effort.	Loyalists supplied information, raised provincial regiments, and fought beside British regulars. Their intelligence and additional soldiers strengthened British forces.
4	Why did Britain lose the war even though it had military advantages? Use evidence about at least one group and one challenge Britain faced.	Britain struggled to supply forces across the Atlantic and coordinate separated campaigns. Patriot persistence and French support helped overcome Britain's advantages.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

French support had the greatest effect on the war's outcome because it changed the decisive campaign at Yorktown. French warships blocked the British escape by sea, and French troops joined American troops in surrounding Cornwallis. The Continental Army was also essential because it kept a main American force in the field through hard conditions. However, the French fleet helped make the surrender possible, so French support was the more decisive contribution.

Accept any accurately supported choice in Part 3 if the student states a claim, uses two relevant passage details, and compares the chosen group with another group. For questions 1 and 4, accept equivalent evidence-based explanations using groups and effects stated in the passage.